

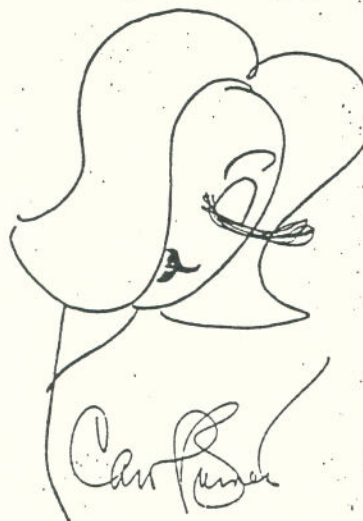
John Lithgow by John Lithgow

# Auction to feature oodles of doodles

By Susan King  
Herald Examiner staff writer

What do actors Alan Bates, Carol Burnett, Bob Hoskins, Paul Hogan, Gene Kelly, athletes Brian Boitano and Wayne Gretzky, playwright Athol Fugard and Alistair "Mr. Masterpiece Theater" Cooke all have in common?

They're doodlers.



Carol Burnett by Carol Burnett

And their doodles are among the more than 140 that will be auctioned off Saturday afternoon at the Back Alley Theater's fourth annual Doodle Auction.

The Doodle Auction is the brainchild of Allan Miller and his wife, Laura Zucker, the Van Nuys theater's producing directors. They got the idea five years ago after attending a "doodle-do" in San Francisco.

"I happen personally to know a lot of well-known people, from Paul Newman to Walter Matthau," says Miller. "We wrote letters to everyone we knew."

The first year, Miller received about 50 doodles. "It just started to spread," he says. "Most people tend to sit down and do a thing for us. We just got one in from Gregory Peck."

Even Laurence Olivier sent Miller a doodle. "He once appeared at the Actors Studio when I was there and I remember that session vividly," Miller recalls. "I wrote him and mentioned I had been there that day and told him how much I admired him. He sent me one, and having gotten something from him, I could write a letter to John Gielgud."

Though some doodles go for about \$15, a sketch by John Huston brought \$2,000. "He sent it to us just before he died," says Miller. "It probably was the last thing he signed or sent. It happened to be very intriguing because it was a sketch of Hamlet holding the skull — the portent of death in the sketch was very compelling."

Not every item is a doodle. This year Shirley MacLaine has autographed a book, and, says Miller: "Johnny Carson autographed a tie."

There are so many doodles that half of them are sold through a silent auction. "You would get too tired if they were all sold through the regular bidding auction," says Miller. "With the silent auction, there is a bid sheet and a minimum bid. The last highest bidder gets the doodle."

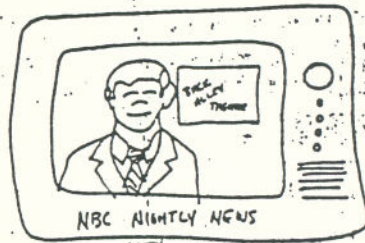
Admission to the auction, which is being held at a private home in Encino, is \$35. The silent auction starts at 3 p.m. on Saturday; the formal auction begins at 4:15 p.m. For information, call (818) 780-2240.



Michael York by Michael York



John Ritter by John Ritter



Tom Brokaw by Tom Brokaw



Mickey Rooney by Mickey Rooney